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FORDHAM UNIVERSITY RAM (NY)
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Nine Students Charged

Protestors Halt CIA Recruitment

by Kieran O'Dwyer

CIA recruiter Jim Fitzgerald was asked to leave the University by Joseph McGowan, vice president for student affairs, last Thursday, February 13, after nine student protestors refused to free the doorway to the office where Fitzgerald was conducting interviews.

Fitzgerald had planned to meet with 15 of 84 students, who had submitted prior applications to be interviewed. He had completed nearly half of his scheduled interviews before being asked to leave.

McGowan informed the nine protestors, among them Tim Cooper, FC'89, Rusty Harold, FC'88, Tony Maisonet, FC'86, Jack Marth, FC'86, Kevin Otterstien, FC'89, Steven Philion, FC'86, Chris Swift, GSAS. Pasquale Strocchia, FC'86, and Jim Weinberg, GSAS, that "internal disciplinary procedures in which suspension or dismissal from the University may result," would be brought against them. All are members of Pax Christi and the Progressive Student Alliance.

"At issue is the right of the students to take away the rights of administrative offices and other students while carrying out a protest," said McGowan. "They've been charged with violation of the code of conduct regarding demonstrations."

In preliminary discussions held earlier this week the protestors asked that their case be heard before the University Judicial Council. McGowan said that he will serve as prosecutor on the council.

The demonstration began at 10:30 a.m. activity period, when the nine protestors blocked the entrance to the Career Planning and Placement Office on the second floor of Dealy Hall, by sitting just inside the doorway. They, and other demonstrators outside Dealy and Keating Third, sought to prohibit the CIA from on-campus recruitment of Fordham students for future employment.

Although passage in and out of the door was still accessible, Marth, president of Pax Christi and one of the nine members of the 'sit-in,' felt the Administration would view their presence as a defiant act against University policy. McGowan decided that their presence was not an obstruction to the University at that point.

"I saw that the office was functioning as usual, be it with some inconvenience. I wanted to give them every possible chance to leave," said McGowan.

"We thought this would be construed as an obstruction but Dean McGowan has said it isn't," Marth said. "It is an easy way out for the Administration because it avoids them from removing us."

Confusion arose among the protestors as to how they should continue their demonstration. Marth spoke up for the group stating, "This office is facilitating the act of recruitment. We will remain where we are, although we do not wish to obstruct the door to those not involved with CIA recruitment. We won't change our plans."

Rev. Denis Moran, S.J., assistant vice president for student affairs, placed a moratorium on CIA recruitment early last year following protests by Pax Christi and the Progressive Student Alliance. November 12, a CIA forum was held and by early December, Moran and other Administrative officials decided to lift the ban. "My decision to allow the CIA to come here had to do with the philosophy of education," Moran said. "My impression is that most of our student body has no objection to the CIA's presence on campus."

Fitzgerald, who had been lecturing on the CIA in Keating Third, arrived at the Career Planning and Placement Office at about 12 p.m. Accompanied by McGowan, head of security Thomas Courtney, and security supervisor Michael Kenny, Fitzgerald moved peacefully through the main door where the protestors were sitting. He went to an office to begin interviewing students who were interested in the CIA.

Among the few interviewed by Fitzgerald before McGowan asked him to leave was Mike Iapalucci, FC'86. He said he was interested in seeking career work with the CIA. "As a Soviet Studies major, a government agency job dealing in specialized work within the Soviet Union would be best for me. The CIA offers these opportunities," he commented. Concerning the protest against CIA recruitment, Iapalucci said he thought it was good. "They have a right to view their points. It is a bit annoying from my standpoint, though."

In the reception area, the nine protestors deliberated for 15 minutes and finally decided to move from the main door to the front of Fitzgerald's door. Here they hoped to deter the interviewing process. The protestors made their intentions clear to McGowan who in turn warned them of the possible consequences. Referring to the University Handbook's Demonstration Policy, McGowan said their proposed move could result in any of three actions:

—First, "That the New York City Police be summoned and that they be requested to arrest violators and clear the area."

—Second, that "The University initiate action to obtain an injunction against the continuance of the disruptive activities."

—Finally, McGowan said, "University disciplinary procedures may be set forth, with suspension or dismissal from the University being a possible consequence."

At 12:45 p.m., the protestors, aware of the graveness of these sanctions, moved freely into a tight circle in front of Fitzgerald's door, with Administrators and office employees looking on. McGowan proceeded with a second explanation of the demonstration policy, at which time he gave the nine protestors a warning. "Your blocking of the door I've decided obstructive...On behalf of Fordham University, I direct you as Vice President of Student Affairs to leave this office and make the doorway free," he said.

Marth thanked the Administration, on behalf of the other protestors, for the respect given to them over the course of their demonstration. "We realize we are in violation of the policy. We have a responsibility though and so will remain here as long as the interviews continue," said Marth. "It is the CIA, not us, who should be removed from this office and off of Fordham altogether."

A second warning was instated by McGowan minutes after the first. The protestors again refused to comply.

Explaining that the University "has chosen to initiate its internal disciplinary procedures," McGowan asked the nine protestors to indentify themselves. He informed them that each person would be given a "disciplinary hearing" wherein their futures as students at the University would be decided.

A termination of the interviews was subsequently called for by McGowan, which resulted in jubilent clapping and hugging of one another by the protestors. Only about six interviews were given by Fitzgerald before he was asked to leave. A crowd of some 30 students and priests clapped and greeted the nine as they walked out of the office, by repeatedly singing "We shall overcome. We shall live in peace."

"We are completely happy with the outcome," said Philion. "The demonstration was a well disciplined, well thought-out action on our part. We believe sincerely what we did, in the tradition of Martin Luther King, was for all the people who have been victims of CIA atrocities." Philion expressed some concern

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